

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed August 4, 2003, Applicants amend their application and request reconsideration. In this Amendment claims 4 and 15 are cancelled leaving claims 1-3, 5-14, and 16-18 pending.

The Examiner acknowledged an Information Disclosure Statement filed with the patent application. That Information Disclosure Statement cited two patent applications pending at the time the present patent application was filed. Of those two patent applications, application number 09/658,484 has been abandoned and there is no continuing application still pending. Application number 09/658,864 has matured into U.S. Patent 6,358,861, issued March 19, 2002.

It appears from the Official Action that the Examiner has interpreted the word "bath" in accordance with a conventional meaning, referring to a liquid. It is apparent from the patent application as well as from claim 1 that the term "bath" refers, at least in part, to the container containing an electrolyte. Therefore, claim 1 has been amended for clarity by referring to the container that contains the electrolyte, which, in the case of the present invention, includes hydrofluoric acid. In addition, claim 4 has been re-written in independent form as amended claim 1. Claim 9 has been re-written in independent form and claim 15 has been re-written in independent form as amended claim 14.

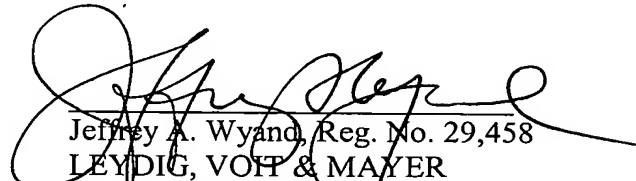
The Examiner indicated that examined claims 2, 4-7, 9-13, 15, and 16, were allowable. In addition, the Examiner stated that claims 17 and 18 are allowed. It is believed this latter statement was incorrect with respect to claim 18, since that claim referred to a rejected claim. However, in view of the foregoing amendment, that error is no longer of any importance.

Since claims 4, 9, and 15 have been re-written in independent form as claims 1, 9, and 14, those three independent claims are allowable as are all of their dependent claims. The other pending independent claim is claim 17, which is already allowed. Thus, the foregoing amendment places the application in form for allowance and the prior art rejections made in the Office Action do not need further comment.

In re Appln. of IZUO et al.
Application No. 10/009,521

Prompt and favorable action are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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Amendment or ROA - Regular (Revised 7/29/03)